Ecological Imbalance in Himalayas

977. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report appeared in the Statesman recently that the kumaon range in the Himalayas, a paradise for mountain loving people throughtout the world is facing the danger of grave Ecological imbalances as the large scale illegal felling of trees is robbing the area of its natural vegetation; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government to avert this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No large scale dectruction and denudation of forests in reported in the Kumaon Range of the Himalayas. Steps taken by the Govt. to prevent degradation of forests in the area are:

(i) Govt. of Uttar Pradesh has banned green felling of trees above 1000 m. altitude in hilly and mountanious regions.

(ii) The forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 was enacted to check the diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes.

(iii) Guidelines have also been issued to the States to involve village communities in protection of forests on usufruct basis.

(iv) The G.B. Pant Himalayan Institute for Environment and Development is engaged in research and development studies.

Ganga Action Project

978. SMT. KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ganga Action Project Phase-I has achieved its target;

(b) whether Ganga Action Project (GAP) Phase-II includes cleaning up of Yamuna and other tributaries of the Ganga;

(c) whether any Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) has been received for it; and

(d) targetted time frame for completion of GAP Phase-I and Phase-II and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Of the 261 schemes taken up in Phase-I of the Ganga Action Plan, 194 schemes have been completed. The remaining schemes are at various stages of implementation.

(b) The schemes for pollution abatement of river Yamuna and a few highly polluted tributaries of the Ganga would be considered for inclusion in the Ganga Action Plan Phase-II which is under formulation.

(c) Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund, Japan has pledged a credit of Yen 17.77 billion for the Yamuna component.

(d) Most of the schemes under the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I are expected to be completed in the year 1993-94. A few schemes would extend beyond this date. Ganga Action Plan Phase-II is still under formulation.

Transition to ozone-friendly substances

979. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had recently proposed to the Indian Industry to take full advantage of the multilateral fund of